



By Mark Knold

Local is the third classification in the government hierarchy. Employment-wise, it is the largest. Local government employment accounts for 9.3 percent of all Utah jobs. With over 100,000 Utahns, this is more than both federal and state employment combined. A local government classification is any government entity below the federal and state level. It includes, but is not limited to, county governments, cities, water and sewer districts, and Indian tribes.

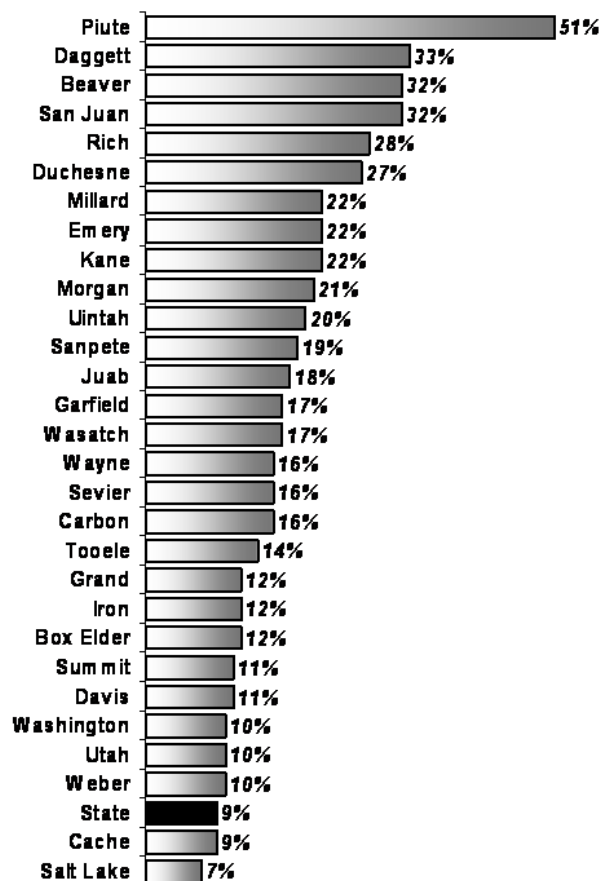
Schools Still Rule

By far, the largest component of local government employment is local school districts. Though K-12 schools are educational institutions, they are administered by local governments. Education accounts for around 58,000 employees, or 58 percent of all local government employment. The education component alone is nearly as large as all employment within the Utah state government. In many of Utah's counties, the school districts make the list of the top-five employers; often the largest employer.

Smaller Means Bigger

The general pattern across Utah is the smaller the county's population base, the larger the percentage of total employment

2002 Utah Local Government as Share of Total Government



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.

concentrated in local government. In some counties, local government is the dominant employer. Counties with 25 percent or more of their employment base in local government include Piute, Daggett, Beaver, San Juan, Rich, and Duchesne. At the other end of the spectrum, the larger counties have the smallest percentages. These include Salt Lake, Cache, and Weber counties — all below 10 percent.

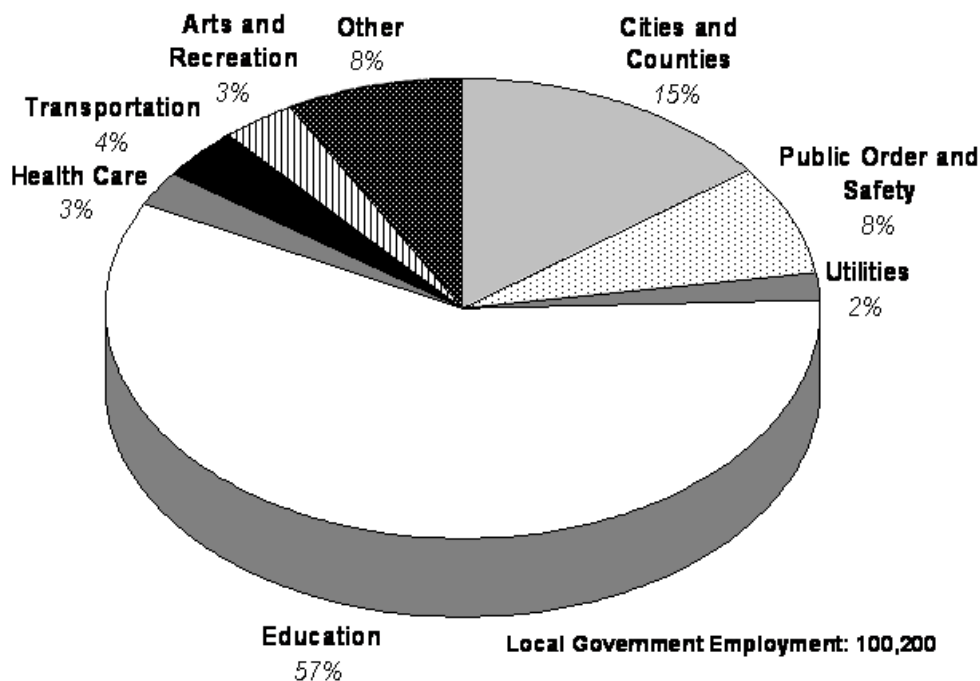
Federal laws treat Indian tribes as independent governments, and so they are classified as a local government. Employment within Indian tribes across Utah is over 800, with the largest being the Ute Tribe in Uintah County.

Other Stuff

Some other public functions that fall under a local government sphere include courts and public safety, utilities, health care, libraries, and recreation.



Where Utah Local Government Employees Worked in 2002



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.